

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend claims 1, 6, 14, 19 and 23 as follows.

Please cancel claims 10-13 and 27-33 without prejudice.

Please add new claims 34-55.

1. (Currently Amended) A coin bank comprising:
  - a coin hopper;
  - a coin slide positioned below said coin hopper; and,
  - a coin separating and sorting assembly located between said
- 5 coin hopper and said coin slide, said coin separating and sorting assembly comprising:
  - a separating wheel including at least one coin receiving
  - aperture and a toroidal flange extending away from a face of said separating
  - wheel wherein said toroidal flange fully encloses an outer perimeter of said at
  - 10 least one coin receiving opening, and
  - a wheel housing on which said separating wheel is
  - supported, said wheel housing including a plurality of coin sorting apertures of
  - different sizes.
2. (Previously Presented) The bank of claim 1 wherein said
- separating wheel further comprises a second toroidal flange having a set of
- gear teeth.
3. (Original) The bank of claim 2 further comprising a motor
- having an output shaft operably connected to said gear teeth of said toroidal

flang for driving the separating wheel.

4. (Original) The bank of claim 3 further comprising a gear train positioned between said output shaft and said gear teeth of said toroidal shaft, one gear of said gear train being fastened on said output shaft and another gear of said gear train engaging said gear teeth of said toroidal  
5 flange.

5. (Original) The bank of claim 2 wherein said wheel housing toroidal channel includes an opening through which said gear teeth of said toroidal flange can be accessed.

6. (Currently Amended) A coin bank comprising:  
a coin hopper;  
a ~~sorter~~ sorted coin container positioned below said coin  
hopper; and,  
5 a coin separating and sorting assembly located between said coin hopper and said sorted coin container, said coin separating and sorting assembly comprising:  
a ring-shaped separating wheel including at least one coin receiving aperture,  
10 a wheel housing on which said separating wheel is supported, said wheel housing comprising:  
a plurality of sorting apertures of different sizes,  
each aperture being sized to allow passage of a coin of a defined maximum

diameter therethrough.

7. (Original) The bank of claim 6 wherein said wheel housing apertures are arranged in a size order.

8. (Original) The bank of claim 6 wherein at least one of said sorting apertures has a trailing edge with an angled surface.

9. (Original) The bank of claim 6 wherein said wheel housing further comprises a central portion located radially inwardly from said plurality of sorting apertures, said central portion having a recessed area in an upper surface thereof.

10 - 13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) A coin separating and sorting assembly comprising:

a separating wheel including at least one coin receiving aperture;

5 a wheel housing on which said separating wheel is supported, said wheel housing comprising at least one sorting aperture which is sized to allow passage of a coin of a defined maximum diameter therethrough;

a first coin support surface provided on one of the separating wheel and the wheel housing; and,

10 a second coin rolling support surface defined on ~~one of the~~

~~separating wheel and the wheel housing wherein said second coin support surface is oriented approximately perpendicular to said first coin support surface.~~

15. (Original) The assembly of claim 14 wherein said separating wheel comprises a set of gear teeth and further comprising a motor having an output shaft operably connected to said gear teeth of said separating wheel for driving said separating wheel.

16. (Original) The assembly of claim 14 wherein said wheel housing comprises a plurality of apertures, arranged in a size order.

17. (Original) The assembly of claim 16 wherein at least one of said apertures has a trailing edge with an angled surface.

18. (Original) The assembly of claim 14 wherein said wheel housing further comprises a central portion having a recessed area in an upper surface thereof.

19. (Currently Amended) A coin separating and sorting assembly comprising:

a separating wheel including at least one coin receiving aperture, ~~wherein said at least one of coin receiving aperture in said~~  
5 ~~separating wheel includes a curved leading edge having a radius of curvature only slightly larger than a diameter of a largest sized coin meant to be sorted;~~

a wheel housing on which said separating wheel is supported,  
said wheel housing comprising at least one sorting aperture which is sized to  
allow passage of a coin of a defined maximum diameter therethrough;

10 a first coin support surface provided on one of the separating  
wheel and the wheel housing for supporting a face of an associated coin;  
and,

a ~~coin-rolling~~ second coin support surface defined on ~~one of the~~  
~~separating wheel and the wheel housing~~ for supporting an edge of the  
15 associated coin.

20. (Original) The assembly of claim 19 wherein said leading edge  
of each of said plurality of apertures of said separating wheel has a thickness  
slightly greater than a thickness of a thickest coin meant to be sorted.

21. (Previously Presented) The assembly of claim 19 wherein each  
of said plurality of apertures in said separating wheel has a diameter large  
enough to accommodate a diameter of the largest coin meant to be sorted  
and wherein a diameter of the largest coin meant to be sorted is smaller than  
5 twice the diameter of the smallest diameter coin meant to be sorted so that  
the two of the smallest diameter ones of the coins meant to be sorted cannot  
fit into a single aperture.

22. (Original) The assembly of claim 19 wherein each of said  
plurality of apertures and said separating wheel has a trailing edge with a  
tapered surface that is smaller in thickness than is a thickness of a thinnest

coin meant to be sorted in order to prevent two of the coins from becoming  
5 stacked in a single aperture.

23. (Currently Amended) A coin separating and sorting assembly  
comprising:

a separating wheel including at least one coin receiving  
aperture;

5 a wheel housing on which said separating wheel is supported,  
said wheel housing comprising at least one sorting aperture;

a coin support surface provided on ~~one of the separating wheel~~  
and the wheel housing; and,

a coin rolling surface defined on ~~one of the separating wheel~~  
10 and the wheel housing, wherein a trailing edge of the separating wheel at  
least one coin receiving aperture is so shaped as to allow an associated coin  
held in said at least one coin receiving aperture to contact said coin rolling  
surface before the associated coin reaches the at least one sorting aperture.

24. (Original) The assembly of claim 23 wherein said trailing edge  
has a tapered surface that is smaller in thickness than is a thickness of a  
thinnest coin meant to be sorted in order to prevent two of the coins from  
becoming stacked in a single aperture.

25. (Original) The assembly of claim 24 wherein said wheel  
housing comprises a plurality of apertures arranged in order of increasing  
size.

26. (Original) The assembly of claim 25 wherein said plurality of apertures are spaced from each other.

27-33. (Cancelled)

34. (New) A coin separating and sorting assembly comprising:  
a separating member including at least one coin receiving aperture;  
a housing on which said separating member is movably supported;  
a stationary coin support surface provided on said housing; and  
5 a stationary coin rolling surface provided on said housing.

35. (New) The assembly of claim 34 wherein said separating member comprises a plurality of spaced coin receiving apertures.

36. (New) The assembly of claim 34 wherein said housing comprises a plurality of coin sorting apertures of different sizes, each coin sorting aperture being sized to allow a coin of a defined maximum diameter therethrough.

37. (New) The assembly of claim 36 wherein said plurality of coin sorting apertures are spaced from each other.

38. (New) The assembly of claim 36 wherein said plurality of coin sorting apertures each include a radially inner edge that is equidistant from a transverse axis of said housing.

39. (New) The assembly of claim 38 wherein said plurality of coin sorting apertures each include a radially outer edge that is located successively further away from said axis, in a direction of movement of said separating member.

40. (New) The assembly of claim 34 wherein said housing includes a transverse axis, said coin rolling surface is spaced from said axis and said coin support surface is located radially outwardly of said coin rolling surface.

41. (New) The assembly of claim 40 wherein said separating member comprises a wheel.

42. (New) A coin bank comprising:  
a coin hopper, and,  
a coin separating and sorting assembly located beneath said coin hopper, said separating and sorting assembly comprising:  
5 a separating plate including at least one coin receiving aperture and a toroidal flange extending away from a plane of said separating plate, and  
a housing on which said separating plate is movably mounted, said housing including at least one coin sorting aperture.

43. (New) The bank of claim 42 wherein said separating plate is rotatably mounted on said housing.

44. (New) The bank of claim 43 further comprising a mechanism for rotating said separating plate on said housing.



45. (New) The bank of claim 42 wherein said separating plate is toroidally shaped.

46. (New) The bank of claim 45 wherein said separating plate includes a central opening which is larger in diameter than is a diameter of said at least one coin receiving aperture.

47. (New) A coin separating and sorting assembly comprising:  
a separating wheel including at least one coin receiving aperture and a toroidal flange extending away from a plane of said separating wheel; and,  
a wheel housing on which said separating wheel is supported, said  
5 wheel housing including at least one coin sorting aperture.

48. (New) The assembly of claim 47 wherein said separating wheel is rotatably mounted on said wheel housing.

49. (New) The assembly of claim 48 further comprising a mechanism for rotating said separating wheel on said wheel housing.

50. (New) The assembly of claim 47 wherein said separating wheel is toroidally shaped.

51. (New) The assembly of claim 50 wherein said separating wheel includes a central opening which is larger in radius than is a diameter of said at least one coin receiving aperture.

52. (New) The assembly of claim 47 wherein said toroidal flange is located radially outward from said at least one coin receiving aperture.

53. (New) The assembly of claim 47 wherein a plurality of spaced coin receiving apertures are defined in said separating wheel.

54. (New) The assembly of claim 53 wherein a plurality of coin sorting apertures are defined in said wheel housing.

55. (New) The assembly of claim 54 wherein said coin sorting apertures are spaced from each other.

56. (New) A coin bank comprising:

a housing;

a coin separating and sorting assembly mounted in said housing, said assembly comprising:

5 a separating wheel including at least one coin reviewing aperture,

a wheel housing on which said separating wheel is supported, said wheel housing comprising a plurality of coin sorting apertures of different sizes, each aperture being sized to allow passage of an associated coin of a defined

10 maximum diameter therethrough;

a drawer slidably mounted in said housing; and

at least one coin tube being supported by said drawer and being removable therefrom.

57. (New) A coin bank comprising:

a housing;

a coin separating and sorting assembly mounted in said housing, said assembly comprising:

5 a separating wheel including at least one coin receiving aperture,

a wheel housing on which said separating wheel is supported, said wheel housing comprising a planar face including a plurality of coin sorting apertures of different sizes, each aperture being sized to allow passage of an associated coin of a defined maximum diameter therethrough, wherein said planar face is located directly beneath said separating wheel such that said at least one coin receiving aperture intermittently overlies each of said plurality of coin sorting apertures; and

15 a plurality of coin tubes, each of which is in communication with a respective one of said plurality of coin sorting apertures, said plurality of coin tubes being disposed at an acute angle in relation to a horizontal plane and being located approximately beneath said coin separating and sorting assembly.

58. (New) A coin bank comprising:

a housing;

a coin separating and sorting assembly mounted in said housing, said assembly comprising:

5 a separating wheel including at least one coin receiving aperture, and

a wheel housing on which said separating wheel is supported, said wheel housing comprising a planar face oriented at an acute angle in relation to a

horizontal plane, said planar face including a plurality of coin sorting apertures of different sizes; and,

- 10 a plurality of coin tubes, each of which is in communication with a respective one of said plurality of coin sorting apertures, wherein said plurality of coin tubes is oriented approximately perpendicular to a plane of said wheel housing planar face.